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REMARKS

Applicant has considered the outstanding office action. It is respectfully submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance as set forth below.

Claims 1-12 are stated to be allowed. It is noted that claim 1 has been amended to correct an informality, i.e., the pronoun "it" has been replaced with "the actuator". .

A certified copy of Italian Patent Application No. FI2002A000178 filed September 25, 2002 is being submitted herewith. Applicant claims priority of the application under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §119, more explicitly set forth at 37 C.F.R. §1.55.

Additionally, applicant is submitting a verified English translation of the priority document, Italian Application No. FI2002A000178 filed September 25, 2002. Accordingly, U.S. Patent No. 6,786,264 (Torres Martinez) is not a reference against the captioned application.

Applicant is also submitting herewith Information Disclosure Citation Form 1449 identifying certain prior art. Copies of the cited foreign and literature references are attached. The literature references are commercial

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materials which are undated. Such literature references, however, are known to have been published prior to the September 25, 2002 priority date of the captioned application. The U.S. and foreign patent documents were cited in the captioned specification or cited in a European Search report for an application corresponding the the captioned application or an application directed to similar technology. A copy of each European search report is attached. It is noted that all the references listed therein were cited for background purposes only and that U.S. Patent No. 5,171,396 has already been cited by the Examiner.

Claims 13-17 and 19-23 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper multiple dependent form. Further, claim 18 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because it is a multiple dependent claim and refers to a multiple dependent claim.

Claims 13-23 have been amended to correct the dependencies. It is noted that new claim 26 corresponds to prior claim 18/17. Withdrawal of the objections is requested. Further, since claims 13-17 are dependent directly or indirectly on allowed claims 1-12, allowance of claims 13-23 is also requested.

Claims 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,171,396 (Rank).

Applicant initially notes that claim 24 has been amended to incorporate limitations as in allowed claim 1, such as two splicing heads and that the single actuator also provides for movement of the roller with respect to the clamping bar to release the second web material.

Applicant submits that Rank does not disclose two splicing heads, each of which is provided with (a) a roller; (b) a clamping bar; (c) a counter-pressure member co-acting with the roller; and (d) a cutting member. Rank discloses a pair of clamping bars 50 which are mounted on a common beam 40 supported by a wagon 46 which moves from a first splicing position (where it co-acts with a first counter-pressure roller 17 and a first cutter 64) to a second splicing position (where it co-acts with a second counter-pressure roller 18) and a second cutter 65.

Further, Rank discloses a splicing device wherein release of the second web material requires moving the roller 25 away from the clamping bar 50 (see Figure 3) with a motion of the carriage 26 with respect to carriage or

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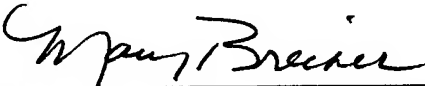
wagon 46 which cannot be imparted by the same actuator which moves the clamping roller 17 or the cutter 64. Thus, it would not be possible to provide the device of Rank with the function as defined in the last clause of amended claim 24.

Accordingly, applicant submits that the method of claims 24 and 25 is clearly distinct from that taught or suggested by Rank. Withdrawal of the rejection based on Rank is respectfully requested..

Reconsideration and formal allowance of the application are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments - Priority Document  
- Verified Translation Of Priority Document  
- PTO Form 1449 w/13 Documents  
- Two (2) European Search Reports